

WHAT IS THE STATEWIDE PLANNING AND RESEARCH (SPR), PART II, PROGRAM?

The Michigan Department of Transportation's Statewide Planning and Research (SPR), Part II, Program is authorized and funded through the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23: Highways, PART 420 — PLANNING AND RESEARCH PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION, Subpart B — Research, Development and Technology Transfer Program Management. This program is administered through the Office of Research and Best Practices (ORBP).

SPR, Part II, funds are available for short-term research projects to alleviate problems that have been ongoing. The results from these research projects could greatly benefit infrastructure related issues in local areas. This money can not be used for any project that would qualify for the funding sources announced annually in MDOT's integrated call for projects.

SPR, Part II, money is federally regulated to conduct true research striving for implementable results. This money can be used for research development and technology transfer activities necessary in connection with the design, construction, management, and maintenance of highways, public transportation, and intermodal transportation systems. Other uses include studies, research, and training on the engineering standards and construction materials for transportation systems described above. This fund can also pay for the evaluation and accreditation of inspection and testing, as well as the regulation and taxation of their use. Most SPR, Part II, projects have a two year duration and average \$100,000 for the two years.

As staff are looking in the field for critical areas in need, it is an ideal time for them to consider how utilizing SPR, Part II, funds could provide a new solution when it comes time to apply the funds they will be requesting from other funding sources. SPR, Part II, money can be used to research possible solutions for future improvements that could affect the quality of life for the citizens of their regions. This can be done by looking for possible multi-modal projects, traffic and safety issues, etc.

ORBP issues a call for research problem statements in February of every odd year. These problem statements are reviewed, prioritized, and strategic selections are made to become part of the following fiscal year's program. Please see ORBP's process maps in the, "Who Is ORBP?" folder, or the SPR, Part II, Administration Manual in revision, found in the "Project Managers Meeting 2007" folder on our intranet site for more details of this process.

ORBP will also be conducting a summit meeting of all Michigan transportation research stakeholders in the fall of every even year. The project ideas gleaned from field observations in the spring and early summer will become part of the discussions at these summits. These meetings are to prepare the parties interested in submitting problem statements during the following Biennial Call Process and allow opportunity for collaboration, cooperation, and/or consolidation of potential research topic resources. The exact date of the summit will be announced this spring. Watch our intranet site for details.